

Request for Proposal
Public Opinion of the Minnesota Courts Study

The Minnesota Supreme Court is seeking a vendor that will work with the Court Information Office to conduct a public survey concerning the opinion of the Minnesota Courts.

In 1999, in response to the Minnesota Supreme Court's involvement in the National Conference on Building Public Trust and Confidence, the Minnesota Supreme Court contracted with a Minnesota based public opinion polling company to conduct a survey of 1,000 Minnesota citizens about their attitudes about and expectations of Minnesota's courts. The result was published in a report: *1999 Public Opinion of the Courts Study*. This project will be a follow-up of that study designed to gauge how public attitudes about the courts might have changed, and to surface new issues that were not evident in the 1999 study.

Respondent will be expected to work with the Judicial Branch's Court Information Office, a division of the Office of the State Court Administrator, to develop questions for a new survey of approximately 1,000 Minnesota residents. The contractor will also be charged with conducting the survey, data analysis, and preparation of a report summarizing the findings, including presentation of the results for each of the questions asked. It is understood that the survey will be conducted by professional interviewers using a computer aided telephone interviewing system, with supervisors using electronic monitoring equipment for quality control.

Contract will warrant that sampling for the survey will provide results that are accurate within five percent (5%) at the ninety-five percent (95%) confidence level.

Final selection will be based on a review by the State Court Administrator that will consider applicants' knowledge of Minnesota, professional reputation, and experience conducting similar types of polling. Final decision will be made by the State Court Administrator.

Project deadline is June 15, 2006. Proposals are due, Friday, April 21, 2006.

Inquiries concerning this solicitation may be delivered by mail, express courier, e-mail, hand, or fax to

John Kostouros
Minnesota Supreme Court
Court Information Office
25 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd
St. Paul, MN 55155
www.john.kostouros@courts.state.mn.us
Phone: 651-296-6043

Proposal Response Format

Any proposal submitted for consideration must follow the format and order of presentation described below:

Cover Letter

Shall contain a summary of the Responder's ability to perform the services described in the RFP and confirm that the Responder is willing to provide those goods and perform those services and enter into a contract with the Minnesota Judicial Branch. The letter shall be signed by a person having the authority to commit the Responder to a contract.

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Shall be organized to show how each element of the proposal meets the needs stated in the RFP.

Responder Qualifications and Experience

Responder shall provide references for similar scope projects provided to government entities within the past seven years. A minimum of three references is required. A contact person and telephone number for each reference must be included.

Technical Proposal

The Responder shall identify the project process and timeline for the completion of each of the identified work products specified in the request: the development of the survey questions, the delineation of the survey audience; the process by which the survey will be conducted to obtain the desired degree of confidence. The responder shall identify specific personnel who will be assigned to lead the project and their experience with similar projects.

Proposed Cost of the Project

The successful Responder will include the following:

- a. The consultant time required developing specific work products, the hourly rates of the consultants associated with each work product or process, and the total cost associated with each component of the project.
- b. Overhead costs including transportation, administrative overhead, report preparation, mailing, and other project costs. Please identify and itemize each anticipated cost.

- c. Total project cost.

Project Schedule

The Responder shall provide a detailed implementation schedule. This schedule is to include implementation actions, timelines, responsible parties, etc.

Number of Response Copies

Each Responder shall submit one (1) signed original response and five (5) additional copies of the proposal.

Project Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of the best value for the court. Best value means achieving an appropriate balance between price and other factors that are key to this particular project. Factors upon which the proposals will be judged include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Conformance to specifications as define in this RFP
2. Responder's familiarity with survey design
3. Responder's experience in executing similar surveys
4. Responder's experience in preparing clear written documentation of survey results
5. Responder's familiarity with the Minnesota courts

Proposal Submission Deadline

Final written proposals must be submitted to John Kostouros at the address indicated above no later than 4:30 p.m. CST on Friday, April 21, 2006

Appendix A

GENERAL RFP TERMS AND CONTRACT CONDITIONS

1. **Estimated Amount:** The Contract shall be for the actual requirements of the State as ordered by the Minnesota Supreme Court, Court Information Office, covered during the life of the Contract. It shall also be understood and accepted by the Responder that any quantities shown in this RFP are estimated quantities only and impose no obligation upon the State either minimum or maximum.
2. **Time of Submission:** All responses must be received by the Court Information Office by the due date and time. All responses will be time-stamped showing the date and hour received. LATE RESPONSES WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.
3. **Alterations or Erasures:** An alteration or erasure of any price contained in the response which is used in determining the lowest responsible offer shall be rejected unless the price figure is crossed out and the correction is printed in ink or typewritten adjacent thereto and initialed in ink by the person signing the response. THIS INCLUDES BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO CORRECTION FLUID AND TYPEWRITER CORRECTION TAPE. RESPONSES PREPARED IN PENCIL WILL BE REJECTED.
4. **Authorized Signature:** The response must be fully and properly executed by an officer or other authorized representative of the Responder. If the Responder is a corporation, a secretarial certificate or the corporate minutes showing that the signing officer has authority to contractually obligate the corporation shall be furnished. Where the corporation has designated an attorney-in-fact, the power of attorney form should be furnished. If the Responder is a partnership, a letter of authorization shall be furnished signed by one of the general partners. A sole proprietor must sign the response. Proof of authority of the person signing the response must be furnished upon request.
5. **Acceptance or Rejection of Responses:** The State reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses, or parts of responses, and waive any informalities.
6. **Addenda to the RFP:** Changes to the RFP will be made by addendum. Any addenda issued will become part of the RFP. Each Responder must follow the directions on the addendum. All requests for clarification must be directed to the contact person listed in the RFP.
7. **Responder Errors:** Prior to the opening of responses any Responder may withdraw a response by notifying the MN Supreme Court Information office in writing of the desire to withdraw, by appearing in person at the office and

withdrawing the response, or by telegraphic writing or facsimile received by the Court Administrator requesting withdrawal of the response.

Subsequent to the opening of responses, a person may withdraw a response only upon showing that an obvious error exists in the response. The showing and request for withdrawal must be made in writing to the director within a reasonable time after the opening of the response and prior to the State's detrimental reliance on the response.

8. **Specifications:** Responders will be held to strict compliance with the specifications. If the response deviates from the specifications, the deviation must be clearly noted in the response. The State reserves the right to reject any or all responses that are not an approved equal.
9. **Material Deviation:** RESPONDERS ARE CAUTIONED THAT BY TAKING ANY EXCEPTION THEY MAY BE MATERIALLY DEVIATING FROM THE RFP. IF A RESPONSE MATERIALLY DEVIATES FROM THE RFP IT SHALL BE REJECTED.

A material deviation is an exception to the response solicitation that:

- a. Gives the Responder taking the exception a competitive advantage over other Responders.
 - b. Gives the State something significantly different from what the State requested.
10. **Prices:** All prices quoted must be firm and not subject to increase unless otherwise provided for in this RFP. A unit price and a total for the quantity must be stated for each item quoted. In case of an error in the extension, the unit price prevails. No more than one unit price may be quoted on anyone item unless otherwise provided for in the RFP. Price reductions must immediately be passed on to the State whenever they become effective. Prices must be quoted in United States currency.
 11. **Cash Discount Terms:** Discounts offered for less than 30 days will not be considered in making the award. The date from which discount time is calculated shall be the date of receipt of the invoice, receipt of shipment or date of acceptance, whichever is later unless testing is performed, then the date shall be the date of acceptance of the goods or services.
 12. **Payment Terms:** Terms requesting payment in less than 30 days will be changed to read "Net 30 days".
 13. **Publicity:** The Responder shall not make any representation of the State's opinion or position as to the quality or effectiveness of the product and/or services

- that are the subject of the Contract without the prior written consent of the State's Acquisition Management Specialist. Representations include any publicity, including but not limited to advertisements, notices, press releases, reports, signs, and similar public notices.
14. **Taxes:** DO NOT INCLUDE sales tax in pricing. The State of Minnesota holds Direct Payment Permit 1114 and pays tax directly to the Department of Revenue.
 15. **Acting in Cases of Doubtful Responsibility:** If the State has a reasonable basis to conclude that a Responder is insufficiently responsible to ensure adequate performance, that Responder's response may be rejected.
 16. **Non-responsive Offers:** Responses which do not comply with the RFP will be considered non-responsive and will be rejected.
 17. **Award:** Unless otherwise provided for in this RFP, the award will be made to the lowest responsible Responder meeting all terms, conditions, and specifications.
 18. **Competition in Responding:** The State desires and encourages free and open competition among responsible Responders. Whenever and wherever possible, the State's Specifications, and General RFP Terms and Conditions will be designed to accomplish this objective, consistent with the necessity to satisfy the State's needs and the accomplishment of a good economical operation. Any evidence of collusion among Responders in any form designed to defeat competitive responses will be reported to the Minnesota Attorney General for investigation and appropriate action. Suggestions from Responders regarding requirements of RFP procedures are welcomed and will be given careful consideration.
 19. **Governing Law:** The RFP and Contract will be construed in accordance with and performance governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota. Except to the extent that the provisions of the Contract are clearly inconsistent therewith, the Contract will be governed by the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) as adopted by the State of Minnesota. To the extent the Contract entails delivery or performance of services, the services will be deemed "goods" within the meaning of the UCC, except when to deem such services as "goods" is unreasonable.
 20. **Laws and Regulations:** Any and all services, articles or equipment offered and furnished must comply fully with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations, including Minn. Stat. § 181.59 prohibiting discrimination.
 21. **Jurisdiction and Venue:** This RFP and the Contract, amendments and supplements thereto, shall be governed by the laws of the State of Minnesota. Venue for all legal proceedings arising out of the Contract or breach thereof shall be in the State or federal court with competent jurisdiction in Ramsey County, Minnesota.

22. **Severability:** If any provision of the Contract, including items incorporated by reference, is declared or found to be illegal, unenforceable, or void, then both the State and Responder will be relieved of all obligations arising under the provision; if the remainder of the Contract is capable of performance, it will not be affected by the declaration or finding and will be fully performed.
23. **Survivability:** The rights and duties of the State and Responder will survive the expiration or cancellation of the Contract.
24. **Assignment:** Responder cannot assign or transfer any rights or obligations under the Contract without the consent of the State and a fully executed assignment agreement.
25. **Conflict of Terms:** In the event of any conflict between these General RFP Terms and Contract Conditions and any Special Terms and Conditions, the Special Terms and Conditions govern.
26. **Ordering Procedure:** To order services, the entity will issue a Contract for the service required.
27. **Cancellation:** Unless otherwise stated in the Special Terms and Conditions, the State may cancel the Contract upon 30 days' prior written notice. Cancellation may be in whole or in part.
28. **Force Majeure:** A Responder shall be excused from performance under the Contract for any period that the Responder is prevented from performing any deliveries as a result of an act of God, catastrophe, war, civil disturbance, epidemic, court order, or other circumstances beyond the Responder's control.
29. **Insurance:** Certificates of insurance, if called for in the Special Terms and Conditions, must be submitted upon request. Failure to do so may result in rejection of the response.
30. **State Audit:** The books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of Responder and its employees, agents, or subcontractors relevant to the Contract must be made available and subject to examination by the State Legislative Auditor and State Auditor for a minimum of six years from the end of the Contract.
31. **Prompt Pay:** The State shall pay all undisputed invoices within 30 days following receipt of invoice for completed delivery of goods and services.
32. **Payment of Subcontractors:** In the event the Responder hires subcontractors to perform all or some of the duties of the Contract, the Responder understands that

Minn. Stat. § 16A. 1245 requires that any such subcontractor be paid within ten days of the Responder's receipt of payment from the State for undisputed services provided by the subcontractor. The Responder agrees to take all steps necessary to comply with said statute. A consultant is a subcontractor under the Contract. In the event the Responder fails to make timely payments to a subcontractor, the State may, at its sole option and discretion, pay a subcontractor any amounts due from the Responder for work performed under the Contract and deduct said payment from any remaining amounts due the Responder. Before any such payment is made to a subcontractor, the State shall provide the Responder written notice that payment will be made directly to a subcontractor. The Responder must ensure that subcontractor transfers all intellectual or industrial property rights it may have in the work performed under the Contract to the State consistent with the intellectual property rights ownership article of the Contract. In the event the Responder does not obtain the intellectual property rights of the subcontractor consistent with the transfer of rights under the Contract, the State may acquire such rights directly from the subcontractor. Any and all costs associated with such a direct transfer may be deducted from any amount due the Responder.

33. **Notice to Responders:** Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 270.66, Minnesota Responders are required to provide their Minnesota Tax Identification Number (or Social Security Number) and Federal Employer Identification Number. Non-Minnesota Responders are required to provide their Federal Employer Identification Number (or Social Security Number) only. This information will be requested only from successful Responders, and may be used in the enforcement of federal and State tax laws. Supplying these numbers could result in action to require you to file State tax returns and pay delinquent State tax liabilities. These numbers will be available to federal and State tax authorities and State personnel involved in payment of State obligations.
34. **Hazardous Substances:** To the extent that the goods to be supplied to the State by the Responder contain or may create hazardous substances, harmful physical agents or infectious agents as set forth in applicable State and federal laws and regulations, the Responder must provide the State with Material Safety Data Sheets regarding those substances. A copy must be included with each delivery.
35. **Risk of Loss or Damage:** The State is relieved of all risks of loss or damage to the equipment during periods of transportation, installation, and during the time the equipment is in possession of the State, unless and until such time as unencumbered title for the goods is vested in the State and the goods are in exclusive possession of the State.
36. **Indemnification and Hold Harmless:** The Responder shall indemnify, save and hold the State, its representatives and employees, harmless from any and all claims or causes of action, including all attorneys' fees incurred by the State arising from the performance of the Contract by the Responder or Responder's

agents, employees, or subcontractors. This clause shall not be construed to bar any legal remedies the Responder may have with the State's failure to fulfill its obligations pursuant to the Contract.

37. **Default:** A State purchase order constitutes a binding Contract. All commodities furnished will be subject to inspection and acceptance by the requisitioning entity after delivery. No substitutions or cancellations are permitted without approval of the State. Back orders, defaults in promised delivery, or failure to meet specifications in the purchase order and/or the RFP authorize the State's Acquisition Management Specialist to cancel the award or any portion of it, purchase elsewhere, and charge the full increase, if any, in cost and handling to the defaulting Responder. A Responder may be removed from the State's responder list or suspended from receiving awards for consistent failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the Contract, or for failure to pay the State for the cost incurred on defaulted Contracts.

39. **Insurance Requirements:**

The successful Responder will BE REQUIRED TO provide a Certificate of Insurance evidencing that the following items are in force and effect during the entire term of the Contract. NO OTHER CERTIFICATE FORMS WILL BE ACCEPTED. The State reserves the right to request a full certified copy of insurance policies.

The Contractor shall not commence work under the contract until it has obtained all the insurance described below and such insurance has been approved by the State of Minnesota. All policies and certificates shall provide that the policies shall remain in force and effect throughout the term of the Contract.

Policy Endorsement Requirements

Contractor's policies shall be endorsed as follows:

- Name the State, its officers and employees as additional insured with respect to services being provided, except with respect to worker's compensation; however, the State is not liable to the insurance company for any premiums, costs or assessments in connection with the Contractor's policy, as a result of being an additional insured.
- Provide the State with thirty (30) days' advance written notice of cancellations, non-renewals or reduction in limits or coverage or other material change, including the name of the Contract, mailed to the following address:

Minnesota Supreme Court
Court Information Office
25 Dr Rev Martin Luther King Jr Blvd

St. Paul, MN 55155

The Contractor's policy shall be the primary insurance to any other valid and collectible insurance available to the State with respect to any claim arising out of this Contract.

The insurance company waives its right to assert the immunity of the State as a defense to any claims made under said insurance.

The Contractor is responsible for payment of insurance deductibles. If the Contractor is self-insured, a Certification of Self-Insurance Form must be attached.

Insurance companies must have an "AM Best" rating of B plus V or better.

a. **Workers' Compensation:**

1. Statutory Compensation Coverage

40. **Disposition of Responses:** All materials submitted in response to this RFP will become property of the State and will become public record after the evaluation process is completed and an award decision made. If the Responder submits information in response to this RFP that it believes to be trade secret materials, as defined by the Rules of Public Access to the Records of the Judicial Branch, the Responder must:
- a. clearly mark all trade secret materials in its response at the time of the response is submitted,
 - b. include a statement with its response justifying the trade secret designation for each item, and
 - c. defend any action seeking release of the materials it believes to be trade secret, and indemnify and hold harmless the State, its agents and employees, from any judgments awarded against the State in favor of the party requesting the materials, and any and all costs connected with that defense. This indemnification survives the State's award of a contract. In submitting a response to the RFP, the Responder agrees that this indemnification survives as long as the trade secret materials are in possession of the State. The State is required to keep all the basic documents related to its contracts, including responses to RFPs for a minimum of thirteen years.

The State will not consider the prices submitted by the Responder to be trade secret materials.

41. **Public Access to Court Records:** The Responder must comply with the Rules of Public Access to the Records of the Judicial Branch, as it applies to all data provided by the State in accordance with this RFP, and as it applies to all data created, collected, received, stored, used, maintained, or disseminated by the Responder in accordance with this RFP.

In the event the Responder receives a request to release the data referred to in this article, the Responder must immediately notify the State. The State will give the Responder instructions concerning the release of the data to the requesting party before the data is released.

42. **Exclusions:** The Contract will not include items which are established under other general price agreement contracts and special items not offered under this solicitation, or emergency purchases or purchases involving trade-ins.